

FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: May 14, 2015

Agenda Item: Nongame Check-Off Workplan

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Proposed

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 minutes

Background

Under the provisions of 87-5-122, MCA, “the FWP Commission shall review and annually approve the nongame wildlife program’s projects recommended by the department for funding from the nongame wildlife account. The Commission shall provide for public comment during the review and approval process.” The average received by FWP from 2004-2014 is \$27,537/year. The total donation from 2013 was \$35,992 and as of March 31, 2015, \$18,972 has been donated for tax year 2014. FWP is proposing the following work in FY15 with anticipated funding:

- \$15,000** Inventory, monitoring and conservation work on Montana Species of Concern and species in need of inventory as determined through a formal ranking process.
- \$5,000** Prioritize habitat for conservation including: 1) identifying the most critical habitat needs for nongame, threatened or endangered species, 2) identifying and monitoring threats to these critical habitats.
- \$5,000** Competitive student stipend for nongame research.
- \$3,000** Contribution to ongoing Sylvatic Plague Vaccine research in Montana.
- \$5,000** Contribution to a landowner incentive program designed to aid in recovery and eventual down-listing of the black-footed ferret.
- \$2,000** Education and outreach efforts to promote nongame wildlife appreciation and conservation.

Public Involvement & Results

None at this time. Public comment will be solicited upon approval for public comment.

Alternatives and Analysis

The recommended work addresses several components of FWP’s overall nongame management program (including threatened and endangered species management), as identified in the Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy. Tax check-off funding is used in conjunction with State Wildlife Grants to address high priority habitat, survey and inventory, and species conservation needs. Alternatives could include allocating more or less among these categories.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends the F&W Commission endorse the proposed work for funding with nongame tax check-off funds.

Proposed Motion

I move that the Fish & Wildlife Commission tentatively approve the proposed Nongame Tax Check-Off work for Fiscal Year 2016.